

Sketches: Impressions

by MadamHydra

Category: Rurouni Kenshin

Genre: Drama

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2000-05-04 09:00:00

Updated: 2000-05-04 09:00:00

Packaged: 2016-04-27 17:06:37

Rating: T

Chapters: 1

Words: 2,861

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: As Kenshin attempts to recover from his battle with Shishio, Megumi recalls their first meeting and grimly contemplates his future.

Sketches: Impressions

> <meta name="generator"> Rurouni Kenshin - "Impressions"

Last modified: 07/30/98

> <br> \*\*\* SPOILER WARNING \*\*\*

> <br> This is a short RK fanfic based on the events in episodes 8 and 62. It takes place after the final battle with Shishio. My apologies, but I'm afraid that you have to be fairly familiar with the series for it to make any sense.

> <br> As always, C&C is greatly appreciated! ^\_^

> <br> -----

> IMPRESSIONS<br> -----

> A Rurouni Kenshin Fanfic<br>

> -----<br> Disclaimer

> All rights and privileges to Rurouni Kenshin belong to Nobuhiro Watsuki, Shuiesha, Sony Music Entertainment, and associated parties. The characters of this series are used without her permission for the purpose of entertainment only. This work of fiction is not meant for sale or profit. <br> English translation of Episodes 8, 62 by Shinsen Gumi and/or HECTO.

> <p>

-----

> Text Conventions<p>

( ) indicates thoughts and mental dialogue

> \* ----- \* ----- \* marks the start and end of flashbacks<p>

>

\*\*\*\*\*

<br>

> Megumi carefully peeled the bandage away and examined the long, deep gash underneath. To her relief, it was healing well and the muscle damage seemed minimal. But from Sano's story, she knew that her patient had come dangerously close to getting slashed clear through to his backbone. If Soujiro's blow had cut just a little deeper.... <br>

> "The wound on your back is healing nicely. But just to be sure, I'll change the bandage." <br>

> "Thank you." <br>

> She put her hands on his shoulders to check the joints for swelling. From the descriptions she'd heard, the Hiten Mitsurugi Ryu succession technique had to put an enormous strain on a person's body. And to use it repeatedly in the space of a single day.... It was a miracle that he hadn't torn his body apart in the process. <br>

> Megumi wondered just how many women had ever had the privilege of running their hands along his strong, sleek muscles.... to feel the smooth warm skin of his back. She was certain that Kaoru hadn't... but was there -- or had there been -- another woman out there who had touched him like this? Sometimes he acted like such a naive innocent, she'd swear that he was still a virgin. But other times, the look of quiet sorrow and endurance in his eyes told her that he was all too well acquainted with real life in all forms. <br>

> Bandage in hand, she stared fixedly at the slowly healing slash that reached across his entire back. Considering the life that he had led and the amount of fighting he had done, he had surprisingly few scars. It was a testament to his consummate skill and extraordinary luck. <br>

> In her heart, she knew what each scar meant. On other people, scars were often reminders of carelessness, stupidity, or reckless actions. But for him, each represented a brush with certain death -- an encounter with an opponent or with opponents bent on his destruction. <br>

....the three thin slashes across his chest where Shinomori Aoshi nearly cut his heart out... the fresh cuts on both sides of his neck -- again, Aoshi's deadly work -- that lay perilously close to vital blood vessels....

> <br> ....the small scar on his right side where Saitoh Hajime had nearly nailed him to the ceiling of the Kamiya dojo....

> <br> ....the healing slash along his back, left by a boy with superhuman physical abilities and no heart....

> <br> ....and the burns, stab wounds, and bite mark -- a BITE mark, by all that was holy! -- left by a beast calling itself Mokoto Shishio....

Those were just some of the injuries she personally knew about. There were others -- older scars whose stories Megumi doubted she would ever know. Kenshin kept his secrets too well.

> <br> Like the crossed scar on his cheek. Over ten years and still unfaded....

> <br> But Megumi couldn't help but wonder to what extremes the Hitokiri Battousai had driven this body. She remembered all too vividly his vicious battle with Saitoh Hajime. The Battousai had chosen to deflect Saitoh's broken blade with his bare hand rather than give his opponent the smallest tactical advantage.

> <br> And these were only the marks she could see. What about the injuries that didn't leave visible reminders -- the broken bones, the strained joints, the torn muscles, the bruised flesh?

> <br> So much pain he had endured.... and knowing him, there would be more to come....

> <br> In her darker, wearier moments, she sometimes wondered why she even bothered. True, he was healing nicely from his current wounds, but she also knew that there would be plenty of new injuries in the future, simply because of the man he was.

> <br> For some people, he was an obstacle that had to be removed at any cost, because of his abilities and his beliefs.

> <br> Megumi thought bitterly, (Isn't that the way of the world? To constantly destroy the best and the greatest things simply because they ARE the best and the greatest?)

> <br> As for himself, if a new threat arose, Megumi had no doubts that he would fight again... and again... and again.... He might do so reluctantly but he would accept the challenge because there was no one else who could do what he did.

> <br> And he would get hurt again... and again... and again....

> <br> If he continued this way, it was inevitable that he would die... and die young. There would be no happily-ever-afters for him and Kaoru. There might be children, if Kaoru got her act together NOW and was very, very lucky. But the chances of him living long enough to see those children grow up were so remote....

> <br> And he would be such a good father....

> <br> Himura Kenshin deserved so much more than an early grave.

> <br> Megumi struggled to control her voice as she whispered, "But if you get hurt like this again, I don't know if...."

> <br> There was a brief silence, then she heard his soft reply.

> <br> "Then I'll be more careful."

> <br> Her vision blurred as tears slowly filled her eyes. Megumi slowly lowered her head against his back and remembered the first time she had seen him,... the first time she had held him in her arms.

> <br> What a blind and selfish fool she had been back then.... in so many ways.

> <br>

\* ----- \* ----- \*

> <br> Megumi fled down the crowded street, desperately trying to elude her two pursuers. She cursed her wooden clogs and their distinctive clacking sound. Megumi wished that she was wearing her sandals instead. But the opportunity to escape had been too good... and she was running out of time.

> <br> She dodged down an alley, doing her best to move quietly. For a brief instant, she thought she'd lost them.

> <br> "There she is, stop her!"

> <br> She glanced frantically to her left to see Kanryu's two goons charging down the alley toward her. Megumi bolted.

> <br> Finally, after a few more minutes weaving and dodging through the narrow lanes and alleys, she paused a moment to catch her breath. However, the thud of rapidly approaching feet told her that all her efforts had been in vain. They were right behind her.

> <br> Desperate for any place to hide, Megumi ran into a small compound and ducked behind the fence. Luckily, Kanryu's henchmen kept on going. But it wouldn't take them long to double back. She had to find a better hiding place or a temporary protector -- someone capable of fending off her pursuers just long enough to give her a good head start.

> <br> She caught the sound of men's voices in the ramshackle house near her. Megumi bit her lip and hesitated. She could be running away from Kanryu's clutches and right into another gangster's lair....

> <br> Suddenly, in the distance, she heard a man shouting, "The sly

bitch must have ducked into one of these houses! Come on!"

> <br> She was out of choices. She lunged up the stairs and flung open the door. Luckily, it wasn't a Yakuza den. Instead, it looked only like a casual gambling game among some scruffy looking men.

> <br> The five men sitting inside stared up at her. She frantically looked them over. The three men closest to her appeared young and harmless... too harmless. There was no way they could face down Kanryu's hardened thugs.

> <br> (Useless! Useless!)

> <br> Another young man with spiky black hair and white clothes looked a bit more capable and tougher than the others. He looked like a streetfighter....

> <br> (Maybe he'll do....)

> <br> But he was only one man and none of these men were armed. Her two pursuers had swords and were all too willing to use them.

> <br> (Wait!)

> <br> Her gaze dropped to the floor between the white-clad ruffian and the slim, delicate-looking young man sitting to his right -- the one she had nearly mistaken for a girl if it hadn't been for the crossed scars on his cheek.

> <br> (A sword!)

> <br> For an instant, she thought... no, hoped that the weapon belonged to the spiky-haired fighter, but then her heart sank as she realized....

> <br> (No, the way it's turned, it must belong to...,) Megumi's eyes shifted to the small, almost fragile man with the long, red ponytail and the patched purple robe, (...to him!?) As for the young man, all he did was give her a bewildered stare with those big violet eyes.

> <br> (What can he possibly....) But then she heard her pursuers coming up behind her.

> <br> (I've got no choice!) Megumi dashed inside, kicked her clogs off, and flung herself at him.

> <br> "Help me, PLEASE!"

> <br> "Oro?"

> <br> As she frantically clung to him, she babbled, "Gangsters are after me! Please save me!"

> <br> She felt his head move slightly against her shoulder as he uttered a soft, confused sound.

> <br> "Huh...?"

> <br> Megumi nearly cried with frustration and disappointment when she heard that single word. It was so gentle, so sweet,... almost child-like in its innocence.

> <br> (Oh god! He's just a boy! What can HE possibly do to stop scum like Kanryu's men?)

> <br> Caught up in her predicament, she failed to comprehend what her hands and arms were telling her. From appearances, the red-haired young man looked frail and positively scrawny. But underneath those loose purple and white clothes lay the firm, sleekly developed physique of a full grown man -- and a master swordsman.

> <br> "We finally found you, Megumi!"

> <br> A large dirty hand fell on her shoulder and started to yank her backwards.

> <br> "No!" she shrieked.

> <br> \* ----- \* ----- \*

> At their first meeting, she had been so consumed with her own problems that she'd completely missed his hidden depths. She had utterly failed to see the shadows lurking in those wide violet eyes

-- failed to hear the underlying strength and resolve in that soft voice.<br>

> Later, Megumi would gradually come to realize just how wrong she had been. She would learn that the young man that she had so carelessly dismissed as an useless innocent could strike like unchained lightning, defeat opponents like the leader of the Oniwa Banshuu,... and could know so much about pain and guilt. <br>

> And as time went on, she would also learn of his dark past and the man he had been -- the killer known as Hitokiri Battousai, a name that still chilled people's blood over a decade after the vicious fighting of the Bakumatsu no Doran... the same Hitokiri Battousai whose skill and ruthlessness set a standard by which nearly all assassins were measured by, even to this day.<br>

> (What a bitter legacy for someone like Kenshin to leave behind....)<br>

> Like so many, she had mistaken his gentleness for weakness. But in Kenshin's gentleness, there was a terrible strength that demanded more from a person than any brute show of force. Soujiro had phrased it very well when he had called Kenshin "a harsher taskmaster than Shishio-san". <br>

> But if he asked for a lot from others, he asked even more from himself. Despite the guilt that would crush any lesser person and the untold amounts of blood he had spilled, Kenshin refused to take the easy way out for himself because he knew that he could do more for others by staying alive. And fighting.<br>

> It was a tremendous burden, but one he willingly accepted. It was his way of atoning for his crimes... no, that wasn't the right word for it. Atonement for his sins,... for all the lives he'd cut short.<br>

> -----<br>

> Kenshin froze as he felt Megumi rest her head against his back. But instead of her usual, playful flirting, she did nothing more.<br>

> Then he felt a warm droplet of liquid slowly run down his spine, stinging ever so slightly as it seeped into his wound. It was followed by another droplet. And yet another....<br>

> -----<br>

> She heard the same soft, bewildered voice she remembered from their first meeting <br>

> "Huh...?"<br>

> There was a brief pause.<br>

> "Megumi-dono...."<br>

> Her fists clenched into fists as she choked back her urge to sob. There was so little that she could do to help him. <br>

> ....so little that any of them could do.... <br>

> Yes, she treated his injuries but that care was all she had to give him. Any competent physician could do the same. Sano and Yahiko both had the will and the heart to help in Kenshin's battles. What they lacked was the skill. And the only ones truly capable of fighting by Kenshin's side were people like Saitoh or Aoshi, people who certainly couldn't be considered his friends....<br>

> Megumi slowly lifted her head. He hadn't moved except to turn his head slightly in her direction,... but she didn't need to see his expression. With his gentle violet-eyed gaze, he would be patiently waiting for her to regain her composure or speak. He would be ready to do anything he could to help with her problem.<br>

> (Kenshin....)<br>

> But this wasn't about Takani Megumi at all.<br>

> She opened her mouth, then slowly closed it. Somehow she realized that Kenshin already knew what lay before him -- knew and fully

accepted it. He was no fool. He had no delusions that he was superhuman or immortal. Himura Kenshin would live his life to the fullest, no matter how short, as the man he was, doing what he believed to be right.... Nothing she could say would ever change that. <br>

> But then she realized that there was something that she COULD do for Kenshin.<br>

> There was one person who could give him what no one else could -- that extra 'something' that might tilt the balance between life and death in his favor during some future battle.<br>

> Yes, she would have to speak to Kaoru. <br>

> And soon.<br>

> -----<br> madamhydra@aol.com

/\\//\\//\\//\\//\\/:E

> <br> <http://members.aol.com/madamhydra/index.html>

> <p>

End  
file.